



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Land Management
National Park Service
Bureau of Indian Affairs

Federal Subsistence Board News Release



For Immediate Release

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Contact:

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Under the Authority of:

36 CFR Part 242.10 and .19

50 CFR Part 100.10 and .19

Federal subsistence fishery for Chinook salmon

Permits will not be issued to take Chinook salmon in the Situk River until further notice

YAKUTAT, Alaska—Yakutat District Ranger Lee Benson has announced that he is acting immediately to protect Chinook salmon in the Situk River near Yakutat. The district ranger, as in-season manager, will not issue Federal Subsistence Fishing permits for the taking of Chinook salmon in the Situk River unless the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) estimates that the weir count of large, three ocean-age and older, Chinook salmon will be within their biological escapement goal range and they reopen the State's subsistence fishery for Chinook salmon in the Situk-Ahrnklin Inlet. The Alaska Board of Fish has set the biological escapement goal range between 450 and 1,050 large Chinook salmon in the Situk River and State biologists have forecasted a return of 826 large Chinook salmon to the river in 2014. Subsistence fishing for species other than Chinook salmon in the Situk River continues to be permitted but the use of gillnets or bait when fishing with rod and reel will not be permitted at this time. All Chinook salmon incidentally caught must be immediately released back into the water with as little handling as possible.

The return of Chinook salmon to the Situk River has been below goals in recent years. In 2010, 2011, and 2012, ADF&G personnel counted only 167, 240, and 322 large (three ocean-age and older) Chinook salmon through their weir on the Situk River. In 2013, the weir count was 912 large Chinook salmon. These permit restrictions are needed to provide for conservation of Chinook salmon in the Situk River. The prohibition of gillnet gear and the use of bait when fishing with rod and reel is necessary to minimize the incidental mortality of Chinook salmon when fishing for other species.

This special action follows similar actions taken by ADF&G to protect Situk Chinook salmon. They closed the sport fishery for Chinook salmon 20 inches or greater in length in the Situk River drainage effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, May 14, 2014 and closed subsistence fishing for Chinook salmon in the Situk-Ahrnklin Inlet effective 6:00 a.m. Sunday, May 18, 2014. The State commercial set gillnet fishery is presently closed in the Situk-Ahrnklin inlet but when it opens

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RIVER

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the retention of Chinook salmon will be prohibited according to the ADF&G Area Management Biologist.

For more information on these permit restrictions, contact Lee Benson by phone (907-784-3359) or e-mail labenson@fs.fed.us.

Information on the Federal Subsistence Management Program can be found at <http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/index.cfm> .

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